

Kevin Diaz, Hot Dish Blog, *Star Tribune*

Rep. Michele Bachmann is squelching a story circulating in Washington that she turned down a post on the powerful House Appropriations Committee, which controls a big chunk of discretionary spending in Congress.

The story, first reported by Politico and picked up Wednesday night by MSNBC's Keith Olbermann, suggests that Bachmann and other fiscal conservatives have shown little interest in serving on the committee, traditionally a platform for doling out earmarks and other forms of government largesse.

Politico cited Georgia Republican Jack Kingston, a fiscal conservative who was quoted saying he had approached Bachmann about serving on the committee. Kingston, said to be angling for the committee gavel, predicted lots of tough votes in the coming year as Republicans take their whacks at the federal budget.

If true, the Politico story would seem damning for any budget hawk or mama grizzly presumably looking for a seat at the table to rein in big government spending.

But Bachmann spokesman Sergio Gor denied the story Thursday. "Congresswoman Bachmann was never offered a spot on the Appropriations committee," he wrote in an email. "This is just a rumor without any substance."

Minnesota currently has only one House member on the vaunted Appropriations panel: Democrat Betty McCollum.

Awaiting word from Kingston's office...